Government have proposed to the Chinese side the opening of additional border trading routes, including through Demchok, Niti and Bumla. Government will continue to explore with the Chinese side the possibility of opening other trading routes along the India-China border.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Any such estimated would be speculative in nature.

Shifting of Dhakeshwari Temple

324. SHRIAJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that there is a plan to shift the famous Dhakeshwari temple situated in Dhaka in Bangladesh somewhere else after removing it from its present place;

(b) if so, whether Government have discussed the issue with Government of Bangladesh; and

(c) if not, whether Government would contact Government of Bangladesh after collecting information in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Racial discrimination in UK

325. SHRIJAIPARKASHAGGARWAL:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cine star Shilpa Shetty was subject to racial discrimination while appearing in the Channel 4 TV Programme 'Big Brother' in UK in January last;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the issue has been raised in British Parliament;

(d) whether any initiative has been taken by Government in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No. According to some initial media reports alleged 'racist' remarks had been directed at Ms. Shilpa Shetty (Indian actor, who was participating in the reality show 'Celebrity Big Brother' on Channel 4, UK) by her co-contestants.

However, on January 18,2007, Ms. Shilpa Shetty was herself quoted as telling the programme organizers "/ don't feel there was any racial discrimination". Again in an interview on the Sky News on February 1, 2007, she was quoted as saying"/ think it stemmed from jealousy, maybe insecurity, you know, but definitely wasn't contrived racism."

(c) Yes, The issue was raised in the British Parliament by Mr. Keith Vaz, Member of Parliament, in an Early Day Motion (EDM 639) titled 'Allegation of Racist Behaviour on Big Brother' on January 16,2007.

(d) and (e) Yes. On January 18, 2007, in view of the controversy as reported in the media, Ministry of External Affairs took up the matter with the British High Commission in New Delhi and asked the British Government to take action under its laws.

(f) Does not arise.

Vote for Venezuela

326. SHRIMATI S.G INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the United States of America had made a request to India not to vote for Venezuela in the election for non-permanent members of United Nations Security Council;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE); (a) to (c) Elections for non-permanent seats of the UN